



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Notes and Opinions.

“Bring Us not into Temptation,” Matt. 6: 13.—This petition in the Lord’s Prayer perplexes every one sooner or later. Its meaning is difficult to grasp, especially when taken in connection with such a passage as Jas 1: 13, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man.” Yet certainly the latter passage is true—God does not lead any one into *temptation*, however much he may for chastening and discipline cause him to pass through *trial*. The distinction made between temptation and trial is a valid one, although the English versions of the Bible do not distinguish the terms, but use the word temptation for both. *Trial* means to place a man in such a position that he must make a choice between good and evil. *Temptation* includes with the opportunity to choose good or evil, an objective inducement and a subjective inclination to choose the evil. We today use the term temptation in this bad sense, as the writer James used it in his epistle, and it gives a wrong conception therefore when one reads or speaks of the *Temptation* of Christ, or of the Christian who is to “count it all joy when he falls into divers *temptations*,” or of God “bringing us into *temptation*.” In all these cases, and many others in the New Testament, it is the idea of *trial* only, of testing the character, and thus developing it. The distinction as regards the petition in the Lord’s Prayer is clearly brought out by the Editor of the *Sunday School Times* in a recent number: “If God leads us by a path where we have to fight in order to triumph, he does not tempt us to do evil, but he calls us to resist and overcome evil. It is quite proper for us, in a sense of our weakness, to pray to God, “Bring us not into temptation;” but, on the other hand, if God [nevertheless] sees best to lead us where we are necessitated to fight evil, we are to be encouraged by the thought of the possible gain of all this. “Count it all joy, my brethren, when [in spite of your prayers to be kept away from the fight] ye fall into manifold temptations [in the path of duty], knowing that the proof [or testing] of your faith worketh patience.” There is no discrepancy between the petition “Bring us not into temptation,” and the declaration that we may “count it all joy” when our course brings us where we have to encounter temptation.”

The Origin of the Semites.—Professor Sayce explains, in the *Sunday School Times* for January 27, the supposition now quite generally adopted concerning the origin of the Semites. According to the Old Testament, the Arabs, the Aramaeans, the Assyrians and the Israelites all descended from Shem. The Arabic, Aramaean, Assyrian and Hebrew languages form a linguistic family intimately bound together by a common pronunciation, grammar and

vocabulary. Language, however, is no test of race, as may be seen from the fact that the Negroes in America speak the English language. Because a man speaks a particular language we cannot infer that he is related in blood to another man who speaks the same language. Ethnologists therefore find it difficult to define what is meant by the "Semitic race." But it seems to be agreed that in the modern native of Arabia we have the purest example of a Semite. The peninsula of Arabia is geographically cut off from the rest of the world, and its inhabitants are consequently protected from admixture with other races, while they appear for the most part to belong to the same ethnological type. Moreover, it is the quarter of the earth where, so far as we know, Semitic languages only have been spoken from the remotest times. In Arabia the Bedouin type is that which may be regarded as most truly and characteristically Semitic, and it is the type to which the majority of the Jews conform, as did also the ancient Assyrians. Since the beginning of history the type has existed in northern and central Arabia; and since it is in this region that Semitic dialects alone have been spoken, it becomes probable that here was the primitive home of the Semitic race. The old monuments of Chaldea confirm this. Even those who hold that the Semites primarily emigrated from the northeast rather than from Arabia admit that this was in an unknown and prehistoric period, and that Babylonia was the "first center of Semitic life," and the seat of the dispersal of the Semites so far as they are known to history. That the primitive Semite was a nomad is admitted by all, and the nomads were constantly passing over into agriculturists with settled habitations, cultivating the land, and living in villages and towns, as the early biblical history records of the Israelites.

Tel-el-Amarna and the Pentateuch.—This subject is valuably discussed by Rev. Henry Hayman, D.D., in the *New York Independent* of February 1 and 8. He says the far-reaching influence of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets on all questions touching early Hebrew literature is not easily exhausted. Clay, written on while soft, and then baked or sun-dried hard, is probably the oldest writing material in the world for records designed to be kept. We may assume for a certainty that it was at the disposal of Moses (familiar with the elaborate system of documentary register practiced in Egypt) throughout the wilderness sojourn. Wet clay of some sort was always to be had, and with a skewer by means of which to trace the characters upon it the writing material was all at hand. The oldest Hebrew words for "write" (*saphar* and *kathav*) meant originally to "engrave." It is repeatedly said in the records of the "Ten Words" of the Covenant that they were "written on tables of stone," probably because that was a more dignified material than the ordinary writing tablet, a slab of moist clay. Again, the Mosaic laws commonly run in short paragraphs of from one to four verses, see Lev. 19 and Deut. 24. A tile of brick with from one to four written surfaces would easily accommodate such compositions. And this would help to explain the great lack of arrangement conspicuous in

the laws of the wilderness sojourn. If the keeping of the tablets in their proper groups were laxly observed, and their first incorporation in continuous manuscripts were conducted without closely critical care, we see at once how likely such derangement would be. This applies especially to Deuteronomy, but the lack of digestive order is largely exemplified also in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Num. 7 is a special example, where every head of every tribe is catalogued with his votive items, in six verses, as we now divide them, identical in every phrase and word, twelve times over. This is simply and naturally explained by the view of tablet records. The originals would be analogous to receipts from the Sacred Treasury, given to the head of each tribe, each with its date duly inscribed; and a duplicate of each document would probably be kept in the Treasury itself. From this the first copyist would reproduce the entire file, names, dates and all. So Gen. 5 appears to have been written on a tablet or tablets. Further, abrupt transitions and *lacunæ* would result from portions of the tablets becoming marred or chipped off. Dr. Hayman then argues at length for the Abrahamic authorship of Gen. 14, the external evidence for which he supports by showing how the matter could be admirably disposed upon a clay brick of a certain size, leaving out the glosses of a later redaction. The incorporation of such tablet records, the primitive units, into connected narrative sections, and these again into larger wholes, such as we call "books" of the Old Testament, was probably a work of ages. Each such book has a long redactional history, and instead of being as late as the latest redactional feature it contains, it must be considered to be in its elements other than the earliest of the signs from which its date is deducible.

Views of Jesus held by Reformed Judaism.—In the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for January, a magazine which represents Reformed Judaism in England, one of the editors, Mr. C. G. Montefiore, reviews M. J. Savage's *Jesus and Modern Life*, a Unitarian work published last year in Boston. It has not been customary for Jewish editors to notice or review books which do honor in any way to Jesus, either as divine or as simply human. Mr. Montefiore says no English-born Jewish scholar has proved himself competent to review Mr. Savage's book, nor does he consider himself so. Yet, he says, "any critical attempt to determine the true character and teaching of the most important Jew who ever lived—of one who exercised a greater influence upon mankind and civilization than any other person, whether within the Jewish race or without it—is surely qualified for a notice in a magazine devoted to Jewish history, literature and religion. A book dealing with the teaching of a Jew whose life and character have been regarded by almost all the best and wisest people who have heard or read of his actions and his words as the great religious exemplar for every age, is surely *a priori*, as we might say, worth the attention of Jewish readers. That members of his own race have mainly constituted the exiguous minority which dissent from the judgment of the best and wisest people as to the moral and religious value of his life and teaching,

renders it *a priori* again, one would imagine, all the more imperative as well as interesting that they should carefully study the question, read the book, and then, if truth so be, maintain with knowledge and acumen their dissentient opinion."

Mr. Montefiore seems to concur with the Unitarian writer in denying the infallibility of Jesus' teaching, also his sinlessness, the miraculous conception, and his working of miracles. Yet he defends the originality of Jesus against the "Jewish authors who sometimes write as if there were an antecedent improbability in his having made any big religious or moral step in advance." But why should he not have done so, he asks. "You can lay down no fixed rules and conditions according to which genius is born. There is no antecedent improbability in a religious genius having been born in Palestine some nineteen hundred years ago. . . . Some Jews seem to think that Jesus is a sort of made-up character, a hero of a novel, who never existed in flesh and blood. Now, apart from the critical unlikelihood and extravagance of such a theory; apart from the fact that the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels is not a consistent character, and is *therefore* not a fictitious one; apart from the fact that the ideal of the reporters would hardly have suggested much which they report, Mr. Savage's words have great weight: 'Some great power there was eighteen hundred years ago, to change the face of the civilization of the world. Great results do not come from nothing.' A religious teacher might, I suppose, be called original who combined and collected together the best elements of religion existing in his time, emphasized those most important and fruitful, developed them, drew out their implications, and rejected or ignored other elements which either did not harmonize with the first, or which, though he and his contemporaries may have been unaware of it, belonged in reality to a lower level and an outgrown age. I am inclined to believe that herein to a great extent lay the originality of Jesus."

Further, the Jewish reviewer disagrees with Mr. Savage's statement that "there is hardly a saying of Jesus in the Gospels anywhere which, so far as ethical or spiritual teaching is concerned, was new." In the sense that they had never been spoken before, Jesus' doctrines may not have been new, but "in the history of a given religion a doctrine may be regarded as new which emphasizes, expands and draws out the implications of some casual saying or term, the full bearing and value of which had not previously been realized and understood. For example, it is possible that the counsel, 'Die to live,' comes from a pre-Christian era; but as a new and definite doctrine it may with propriety, I should imagine, be ascribed to Jesus." Again, he agrees with Mr. Savage in holding that "first of all stands out in the life of Jesus the fact, perhaps unequalled anywhere else in the history of the world, of what I can but call the God-consciousness of the man." As to how far Jesus was interested in the moral and religious welfare of the Gentile, Mr. Montefiore writes: "I think we may truly say that Jesus had an enthusiastic love for the poor and the miserable and the outcast, among whom and for whom he lived and taught;

a love, too, for the sinner so long as that sinner was neither proud nor hypocritical; but whether he consciously and deliberately extended his thoughts and care to the nations without Israel, seems rather doubtful. It is, however, probable that what he saw and what interested him in his own people whom he loved, was not their Jewish descent or their Israelite privileges, but their common humanity, and their relationship as men and women to the divine Father." Nor does he understand why Jews as such should not accept their characteristics of Jesus as accurate.

When Mr. Savage writes: "We must frame Jesus in the lights and habits of his age, and give him a background of the world that was around him, and judge him in the light of these," Mr. Montefiore deplores the fact that the Unitarian author, and others, do not know those habits and beliefs more intimately and at first hand, but instead accept "the customary babble of the text-books," such as the misconception that the Pharisees' notion of God was that of a "far-removed, awful being, King, Master, Judge, jealous, demanding absolute and exact obedience to the ritual law;" similarly, the current ideas as to the popular eschatology of that time are pronounced vague and inaccurate. He holds with Mr. Savage that Jesus taught the permanence of the Jewish law. Also, that in regard to such deep questions as the nature and origin of sin, Jesus merely accepted the simple notions current in his day. As to the official claims of Jesus, Mr. Montefiore says: "It seems to me that Mr. Savage is perfectly right in concluding that Jesus supposed himself to be 'The Messiah.' . . . Jewish critics are usually disposed to animadvert strongly upon the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah. For either, they say, he knew that he was not the Messiah, but pretended that he was, in which case he was a deceiver; or he thought that he was the Messiah, although he was not (for he did nothing which the Messiah has to do), in which case he was self-deceived, and therefore not an inspired teacher or an ideal pattern of goodness and religion. I am not sure whether this second deduction is true. After all, Isaiah and most of the other great prophets were equally wrong as to the Messiah and the Messianic age. All believed in their imminence, and yet none seemed disappointed by the mistakes and errors of his predecessors. It is true that none of them supposed that he was himself the Messiah, but I do not know that this makes the delusion worse, or the teaching less religious. And certainly the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah, however unfounded and however disproved, did not seem to exercise any corrosive or warping influence upon his character. He was not puffed up by vanity or self-assertion or conceit. He remained pure and humble and loving to the last. He conceived himself only as the servant of God."

The quotations from this review are thus extended because it is a matter of great interest to know and see that one school of Judaism is coming to an appreciation of the historic Jesus, in his purity, wisdom, love and strength.